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TORRINGTON RURAL DISTRICT

1948.

REPORTS

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND SANITARY SURVEYOR

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31ST DECEMBER, 1948.

GREAT TORRINGTON:
Printed by COPP & SON, "Osborne Printing Works,"
4, Well Street.

STAFF.

PART TIME OFFICER:

Medical Officer of Health—

Dr. E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

WHOLE TIME OFFICERS:

Sanitary Inspector and Building Surveyor—

F. G. GANE, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Clerk—Miss V. MOORE.

Health Department,
Hodge's Chambers,
Torrington.

To the Chairman and Members of the Torrington Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

We have pleasure in presenting our Annual Reports for the year ended 31st December, 1948.

We are, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,

E. H. WALKER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
Medical Officer of Health.

F. G. GANE, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,
Sanitary Inspector & Building Surveyor.

Torrington Rural District.

1948

General Statistics.

Area (Acres)...	79,825
Population (R.G.)	7,342
Number of Inhabited Houses	2,492
Rateable Value	£20,344
Sum realised by a Penny Rate	£84 15s. 4d.

Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year.

Live Births ... ... Male 40, Female 35, Total 75.

Decrease of 41 on previous year.

Birth Rate per 1000 of estimated Population .. 10·2.

Deaths ... 65. A decrease of 40.

Death Rate per 1000 of estimated Resident Population ... 8·8.

Annual Report of Medical Officer of Health.

General Sanitary Conditions of the District.

Nursing.

The area is provided with Midwives and Nurses by the new Health Authorities.

Hospitals.

The District is served by the National Hospitals of Torrington, Bideford, Barnstaple and Exeter. It is a pity that the new authorities

should start by taking away the Private Wards of Torrington Hospital, recently built by a gentlemen in remembrance of his wife, instead of building a new Ward for Maternity Cases.

Clinics and Other Medical Practitioners.

The Clinics in the area are now under the National Scheme as are the General Practitioners.

Isolation Hospital and Infectious Disease.

Bideford and District Isolation Hospital serves the area.

During the year Seven cases of Whooping Cough, Seventeen cases of Measles and one case of Scarlet Fever were notified.

Five new cases of Tuberculosis, Two Pulmonary and Three Non-Pulmonary were also notified. There is a Tuberculosis Clinic under a whole time Medical Officer at Barnstaple.

Ambulance Service.

The area is served by an Ambulance at Torrington and the adjoining areas.

Laboratory Facilities.

The Health Laboratory at Exeter is used mostly.

Maternity Services.

The area is served by Midwives and some Hospital accommodation is provided. Mothers are looked after before, during and after their confinement, and there are Baby Clinics.

Schools.

These are being brought up to date, but water is not adequate at some. A few are being closed with the advent of the motor coach.

Dairies and Cowsheds.

These are improving but many require better water supplies and electricity would be a great benefit.

Venereal Disease.

There is very little in a rural area and there is a Clinic at Barnstaple.

Infestation.

There is very little now the evacuees have departed.

Water.

This is often poor in quality and quantity, but the new water scheme to supply North Devon has started.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

This is now controlled by the County Health Authorities. When they took over nearly all the children had been done.

Mental Health.

This is now being increasingly looked after by specially appointed officials.

Drainage.

This is poor in nearly all the villages.

Annual Report of Sanitary Inspector.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Dwellings inspected under Housing Acts	5
Dwellings inspected under Public Health Acts ...	12
Re-inspections under Housing Acts	3
Re-inspections under Public Health Acts	22
Keeping of Animals	2
Offensive accumulations	2
Enquiries into cases of Infectious Disease	4
Number of rooms disinfected	4
Visits to Factories	2
,, ,, Bakehouses	4
,, ,, Schools	4
Food Inspections	9
Number of Milk samples	—
Number of Water samples	10
Building inspections under Bye-laws	71
Visits to Council Housing Sites	208
Defective drains	12
Drains tested	28
Rats and mice	3
Plans investigated	95
Cowsheds inspected	38
Petroleum inspections	12
Dirty houses	—
Farm Water supplies	22
Miscellaneous	119

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1.—**INSPECTIONS** for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of Inspections (4)	Number of Written notices (5)	Number of Occupiers prosecuted (6)	M/c line No. (7)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	1	56	6	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies						
(*a*) Subject to the Local Authorities (Transfer of Enforcement) Order, 1938†	2	—	—	—	—	2
(*b*) Others	3					3
(iii) Other Premises under the Act‡ (excluding outworkers' premises)	4					4
TOTAL		56	6	—	—	

2.—CASES IN WHICH **DEFECTS** WERE FOUND

Particulars	M/c line No.	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted	M/c line No.
		Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	5						5
Overcrowding (S.2)	6						6
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	7						7
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	8						8
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	9						9
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)							
(*a*) Insufficient	10						10
(*b*) Unsuitable or defective	11						11
(*c*) Not separate for sexes	12						12
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	13						13
TOTAL	60	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	60

OUTWORK—(Sections 110 and 111). Nil.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:

(1) (a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	17
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	42
(2) (a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	5
(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	8
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	2
(4)	Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	15

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal Notices:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	28

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:

A. Proceedings under Section 17, 18 and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930.

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	Nil
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a)	by owners	Nil
(b)	by local authority in default of owners ...	Nil

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	1
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—	
(a)	by owners	1
(b)	by local authority in default of owners ...	Nil

C. Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930.

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	2
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil

D. Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930

(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having being rendered fit	Nil

Improvements carried out and nuisances abated at premises (other than Farms and Dairies).

External.	*No. of houses.*
Walls repaired	18
Roofs repaired	16
Guttering repaired	5
Downspouts repaired	2
Chimneys repaired	2
Water supply laid on into houses	38
New pumps provided	2
Wells cleansed	—
Well steinings repaired	1
New lengths drain laid	28
Defective drains repaired	4
New inspection chambers	12
Septic tanks repaired	—
New Septic tanks	8
New gullies	11
New W.C's.	16
Water supply laid on to W.C's.	8
W.C. cisterns renewed	10
New washing accommodation	1
Outbuildings repaired	2
Houses painted	4
Internal.	
Walls replastered	10
Ceilings replastered	10
Windows repaired	8

Doors repaired...	6
Floors repaired	15
Cooking appliances repaired or renewed	16
New sinks	8
New sculleries	—
Baths installed	8
Food storage improved	1
Stairs repaired	—
Hot water systems fixed	8

New Housing Accommodation.

Number of new houses erected by local authority ...	12
,, ,, new houses erected by private enterprise...	4
,, ,, premises converted into dwellings ...	6
,, ,, houses converted into two dwellings ...	1
,, ,, family units made by conversion of camp buildings into flats	1

COUNCIL HOUSING PROGRAMME.

12 houses were completed during the year, and at the close of the year another 10 were nearing completion. Contracts were in hand for a further 12. Progress, generally, has been disappointing, and delays have occurred at all stages.

CIVIL BUILDING LICENCES.

The issue of licences is carried out by a small Committee of the Council.

Licences issued in respect of repairs, maintenance or miscellaneous building work to housing.

No. of licences issued.	Value in £
120	9,937.

Licences issued in respect of all building work other than housing.

No. of licences issued.	Value in £
44	2,085

Licences issued for conversions and adaptations by private enterprise to provide additional housing accommodation.

Total value in £	Total No. of family units of accommodation provided.
3,268	9

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS, AND MILK SUPPLY.

There are 558 registered Cow-keepers in the district, including 89 Retail-producers. Several visits have been made during the year and advice has been given on structural alterations and clean milk production. Many of the cow-sheds are in an unsatisfactory state and need remodelling. Considerable improvements have been carried out since building restrictions were partially raised.

There are 25 Accredited Producers and 9 Tuberculin Tested Producers in the district.

Most of the milk produced in the area goes to two milk factories where samples are regularly taken for examination under the National Milk Testing Scheme. Samples are also taken by the Sampling Officers of the County Council from T.T. and Accredited Producers.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Except for the village of Winkleigh the water supply of the district cannot be regarded as satisfactory either in quantity or quality and a piped supply should be regarded as a matter of great urgency. The North Devon Water Board have now taken over the maintenance of all public wells in the district. Some of the water in the district is plumbo-solvent. Samples are tested for Ph value on request, and advice given regarding the use of pipe materials. There are now 125 houses in the village of Winkleigh connected to the public water mains. No stand-pipes have been erected.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The Council's Consulting Engineer has prepared a scheme for the village of Winkleigh and this has been submitted to the Ministry of Health. It is hoped that this will soon be followed by schemes for other villages, the need for which is urgent in many cases.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Animals intended for human consumption in the district are slaughtered at the Public Abattoir at Bideford, where the carcases and offals are inspected before allocation.

The following foods were condemned during the year :—

28 Tins of Salmon (Grade I)
21 10 oz. Jars Pickles.
5 12 oz. Bottles Mixed Pickles.
13 Jars Apple and Tomato Chutney.
1 19 oz. Tin of Peas.
1 14½ oz. Tin of Evaporated Milk.
111 lbs. Beef (A) Hind Quarter.

PETROLEUM AND CALCIUM CARBIDE LICENCES.

1 calcium carbide licence was issued during the year and 22 petroleum licences.

SLAUGHTERING LICENCES.

60 licences were issued during the period.

PLANS.

95 plans were submitted during the year, and apart from modifications, all were approved, except 7. Since July, the Devon County Council have become the Planning Authority, but they have delegated some of their duties to the local authorities. This has resulted in a considerable increase of work in my office.